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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-20
HA-05 AID-05 /089 W
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R 122228Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1073
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

UNCLAS SAN JOSE 2053

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, ROSALYNN)
SUBJECT: MRS. CARTER'S PARTICIPATION IN COSTA RICA'S PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION

1. SUMMARY: ROSALYNN CARTER'S TWO DAY PARTICIPATION AS HEAD OF USDEL AT THE CARAZO PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION WAS A RESOUNDING SUCCESS IN EVERY WAY. COSTA RICANS WERE EXPOSED ONCE AGAIN TO HER WARMTH AND GENUINE INTEEST IN THEIR COUNTRY; THEY LOVED THE ATTENTION AND THEY WERE DEEPLY HONORED BY HER PRESENCE. THE NEW CARAZO GOVERNMENT FEELS THAT IT HAS BEEN SINGLED OUT, AND THAT THE OVERALL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US IS OFF TO AN EXCELLENT START. THROUGH THIS VISIT THE US DEMONSTRATED TO LATIN AMERICA AND THE DEVELOPING WBRLD ONCE AGAIN THAT WE INDEED HOLD DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES SUCH AS COSTA RICA IN VERY HIGH REGARD. END SUMMARY

2. MRS. CARTER LED A SEVEN PERSON DELEGATION, WHICH INCLUDED ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR ABELARDO VALDEZ, AND SEVERAL PROMINENT MEMBERS OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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HISPANIC-AMERICAN COMMUNITY, TO RODRIGO CARAZO'S 8 MAY INAUGURATION AS PRESIDENT OF COSTA RICA. HER 7 MAY AIRPORT ARRIVAL STATEMENT IN SPANISH RECEIVED WIDE AND FAVORABLE COMMENT BY LOCAL MEDIA; SHE USED SPANISH EFFECTIVELY THROUGHOUT THE VISIT. SHE WAS CENTER OF ATTENTION WHEN SHE PRESENTED CREDENTIALS TO PRESIDENT ODUBER, AT FORMIN FACIO'S 700 PERSON RECEP-

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TION FOR FOREIGN DELEGATIONS, AND AT PRESIDENT CARAZO'S
GLITTERING NATIONAL THEATER RECEPTION ON INAUGURATION
NIGHT. CROWDS AWAITED HER ARRIVAL AND DEPART-
URE FROM ALL THE OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS, AND BURST INTO
APPLAUSE WHEN THEY SAW HER. ON INAUGURATION DAY MRS.
CARTER WALKED WITH THE USDEL ACROSS THE NATIONAL STADIUM
TO THE OFFICIAL STANDS AMID APPLAUSE UNMATCHED BY THAT
FOR ANY OTHER DELEGATION, AND EXCEEDED ONLY BY
THE CROWD'S RECEPTION OF THE FBI PRESIDENT.

3. THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE VISIT WAS A TWO HOUR BREAKFAST
MEETING WITH PRESIDENT AND MRS. CARAZO AND FEMALE CABINET
OFFICIALS AND LEGISLATORS ON 9 MAY, THE FIRST FULL
WORK DAY FOR THE NEW ADMINISTRATION. THE CARAZO'S MEANT
THIS OCASSION TO BE A SPECIAL GESTURE TO MRS. CARTER,
AND IT WAS SO INTERPRETED IN COSTA RICA. THE ATMOS-
PHERE IN THE CASA PRESIDENCIAL WAS WARM AND INFORMAL;
THE PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY OF COSTA RICA HAD AMPLE
OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT AND EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH MRS.
CARTER. AT THE JOINT MEETING WITH THE PRESS THAT
FOLLOWED BREAKFAST, MRS. CARTER SPOKE ON WHY SHE AND
HER PREDOMINANTLY SPANISH-SPEAKING DELEGATION WERE IN
COSTA RICA. SHE WAS QUESTIONED ABOUT VESCO, US-COSTA
RICAN RELATIONS, AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS POSITION OF
ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN. PRESIDENT CARAZO ALSO
RECEIVED VESCO QUESTIONS, AND PAID SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO
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THE FOUR HISPANIC-AMERUAN MEMBERS OF THE USDEL WHO,
HE NOTED REPRESENT THE LARGEST MINORITY GROUP IN
THE US. CROWDS OF CHEERING SCHOOL CHILDREN AWAITED
MRS. CARTER AND THE CARAZO'S WHEN MRS. CARTER DEPARTED.

4. MRS. CARTER'S OFFICIAL PROGRAM ENDED WITH THE
CARAZO BREAKFAST. LATER THAT MORNING, ON THE WAY TO
NEARBY ALAJUELA WHERE SHE SPENT TWO PRIVATE
VACATION DAYS, SHE QUIETLY VISITED THE SAME SCHOOL
FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN THAT SHE VISITED ALMOST A YEAR
AGO. THE RECEPTION BY THE CHILDREN WAS DESCRIBED BY
THOSE WHO WERE THERE AS JOYFUL.

5. MEDIA COVERAGE OF MRS. CARTER'S ACTIVITIES WAS
ECLIPSED ONLY BY THE INAUGURATION ITSELF (DETAILS IN
SAN JOSE 2026). MRS. CARTER AND ASISTANT SECRETARY
TODMAN, EX-US AMBASSADOR TO COSTA RICA, WERE INTER-
VIEWED AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY; COSTA RICANS SEEMED TO
TAKE SPECIAL DELIGHT IN THEIR BEING PART OF THE SAME
DELEGATION.

6. COMMENT: PRESENCE OF USDEL HEADED BY ROSALYNN

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CARTER MADE THE INAUGURATION OF A NEW, FREELY-ELECTED PRESIDENT OF COSTA RICA ESPECIALLY MEANINGFUL FOR ALL COSTA RICANS. TICOS WERE OBVIOUSLY PROUD BECAUSE OF THE SYMBOLISM AND THE ATTENTION MRS. CARTER'S PARTICIPATION REPRESENTS FOR THEM, I.E., THE SPECIAL REGARD THE US HAS FOR DEMOCRATIC COSTA RICA. BUT THEY WERE ALSO PROUD BECAUSE A FRIEND WHOM THEY HAVE GROWN TO LOVE AND TRUST CAME BACK TO HONOR THEM WITH A VISIT -- AND TO STAY A FEW EXTRA DAYS TO ENJOY THEIR HOSPITALITY. WEISSMAN

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